

- (b) measuring the detectable signal in the presence of the test compound;
and
- (c) comparing the magnitude of the signal detected with a control,
wherein when the magnitude of the signal detected is decreased relative to the control, said
test compound destabilizes mRNA.

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[Please substitute the following claim 2 for the currently pending claim 2:]

2. (Once amended) A method for the identification of a compound which induces
mRNA degradation, comprising:

- (a) contacting the compound with a DNA expression system which, in the
absence of the compound, is capable of expressing a protein having a
detectable signal, wherein mRNA which codes for the protein and
which is transcribed from the expression system comprises at least one
copy of a mRNA instability sequence;
- (b) measuring the detectable signal in the presence of the test compound;
and
- (c) comparing the magnitude of the signal detected with a control,
wherein when the signal detected is decreased relative to the control, said compound induces
mRNA degradation.

[Please substitute the following claim 3 for the currently pending claim 3:]

3. (Once amended) A method for the comparison of compounds which induce mRNA degradation, comprising:

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- (a) separately contacting the compounds with a DNA expression system which in the absence of the compounds is capable of expressing a protein having a detectable signal, wherein mRNA which codes for the protein and which is transcribed from the expression system comprises at least one copy of a mRNA instability sequence;
 - (b) measuring the detectable signal in the presence of each test compound; and
 - (c) comparing the signals obtained to determine the mRNA instability-promoting activity of the compounds.

[Please substitute the following claim 4 for the currently pending claim 4:]

4. (Once amended) A reporter gene DNA expression system comprising a gene coding for expression of a protein having a detectable signal, wherein the gene comprises DNA coding for the amino acid sequence of the protein operably linked to 5' and 3' UTR sequences, wherein said 5' and 3' UTR sequences comprise appropriate expression control elements and DNA, wherein the DNA codes for at least one copy of a mRNA instability sequence.

[Please substitute the following claim 5 for the currently pending claim 5:]

5. (Once amended) A stably transfected cell line comprising the reporter gene DNA expression system of claim 4.

B4 [Please substitute the following claim 6 for the currently pending claim 6:]

6. (Once amended) An assay system for the identification of compounds which destabilize mRNA comprising the reporter gene DNA expression system of claim 4, and a control DNA expression system which comprises a gene coding for expression of the protein having the detectable signal, wherein the gene comprises DNA coding for the amino acid sequence of the protein operably linked to 5' and 3' UTR sequences comprising appropriate expression control elements but lacking any functional mRNA instability sequence.

[Please substitute the following claim 7 for the currently pending claim 7:]

7. (Twice amended) An assay system comprising a stably transfected cell line according to claim 5, and a stably transfected cell line comprising a control DNA expression system which comprises a gene coding for expression of the protein having the detectable signal, wherein the gene comprises DNA coding for the amino acid sequence of the protein operably linked to 5' and 3' UTR sequences comprising appropriate expression control elements but lacking any functional mRNA instability sequence.

[Please substitute the following claim 8 for the currently pending claim 8:]

8. (Once amended) A stably transfected cell line comprising the reporter gene DNA expression system of claim 4 and a control gene DNA expression system, said control gene DNA expression system comprising a gene coding for expression of a protein having a detectable signal which is different than the protein of the reporter gene DNA expression system and wherein said control gene DNA expression system comprises DNA coding for the amino acid sequence of the protein operably linked to 5' and 3' UTR sequences comprising appropriate expression control elements but lacking any functional mRNA instability sequence.

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[Please substitute the following claim 11 for the currently pending claim 11:]

11. (Once amended) A method of treating or preventing a disease or medical condition in a subject, wherein the disease or medical condition is associated with inappropriate mRNA stabilisation and/or accumulation and undesirable protein expression, comprising administering to the subject the compound of claim 10.

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[Please substitute the following claim 12 for the currently pending claim 12:]

12. (Once amended) A compound which destabilizes mRNA identified by the use of the DNA expression system of claim 4.

[Please substitute the following claim 13 for the currently pending claim 13:]

13. (Once amended) A compound which destabilizes mRNA identified by the cell line of claim 5 or 8.

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[Please substitute the following claim 14 for the currently pending claim 14:]

14. (Once amended) A compound which destabilizes mRNA identified by the assay system of claim 6, 7 or 9.